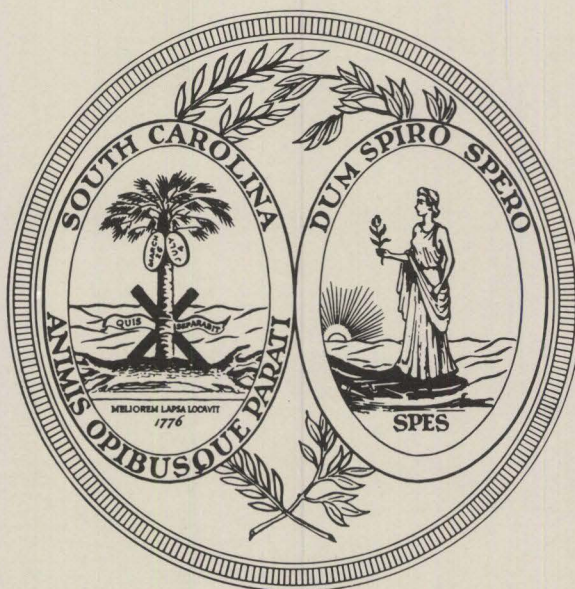


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# **SOUTH CAROLINA CONFEDERATE RELIC ROOM AND MUSEUM**



## **ANNUAL REPORT 1987-1988**

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL  
FROM THE  
SOUTH CAROLINA CONFEDERATE RELIC ROOM & MUSEUM

To His Excellency, Governor Carroll A. Campbell, Jr. and the  
Honorable Members of the General Assembly of South Carolina:

With pleasure, we submit the annual report of the South Carolina  
Confederate Relic Room & Museum for fiscal year 1987-1988.

Our primary function is telling the story of South Carolina's  
heritage in an educational and interesting way. Teachers, stu-  
dents, authors, researchers and the general public have rewarded  
the museum with their compliments, continued interest and support.

  
John A. Martin, Jr.  
Director

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## **CONFEDERATE RELIC ROOM & MUSEUM**

Accredited by the American Association of Museums

### **DIRECTOR**

(John A. Martin, Jr.)

### **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

(Renee M. Watts)

### **CURATORS**

(John M. Bigham)

(Dotsy L. Boineau)

(Christopher H. Craft)

The **DIRECTOR** is responsible for the entire operation of the museum. In addition to supervising the every day operation, duties include locating and acquiring gifts; keeping abreast of the latest methods of conservation and display; identifying objects for the public; preparation of the budget request, detail budget and the annual report.

The **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT** is responsible for office management including all secretarial work; personnel records; proper accounting and expenditures of all monies; payroll; assisting in the preparation of the budget request, detail budget and annual report; answering the telephone; ordering supplies and authorizing requisitions and vouchers; opening and distributing mail; reports to other agencies; attends meetings and workshops pertaining to fiscal and personnel subjects.

The **CURATORS** are responsible for scheduling and conducting tours and meetings; giving information to visitors; inventory of artifacts; performing research; acquiring and accessioning gifts; conservation, which includes periodically cleaning firearms and edged weapons, conditioning leather, and restoration of fabrics; exhibits, which includes fabricating, designing and changing displays, composing narrative, labeling and sign making; keeping the museum areas clean and attractive; carpentry.

The **AUTHORITY** for the operation of the museum is vested in the annual Appropriation Act, commencing with 1909 and running continuously to the present.

## **HISTORY OF THE MUSEUM**

The collection was started in 1895. A room was provided in the Library of the South Carolina College to house the artifacts. Before long the collection had outgrown the facility. In 1901 the Legislature assigned a room on the Senate side of the balcony

in the State House. Keeping the collection available to visitors five days per week, in addition to seeking and cataloging gifts, had become burdensome for the volunteers, so in 1909 the Legislature appropriated funds for the maintenance and has continued to do so.

Initially interested in collecting and preserving artifacts from the Confederate period, it was soon realized that we should collect from all periods of South Carolina history, lest the items be lost. So by the turn of the century we had expanded our horizons. Being the only historical repository in this area, Constitutional Officers and Legislators placed artifacts in the collection as early as 1901. Some of the early accessions included the vest of John Huger, first Secretary of State of South Carolina, 1776; a wedding dress made from draperies, 1868; a cannon marked 1778. Many gifts have been received from throughout the country. To mention a few: from San Diego, California, came the Catawba Rifles Flag; from Alabama, the Colors of the Claremont Rifles; from Arizona, a sailor's blouse and two sailor hats from the USS South Carolina; from Maryland, Confederate currency issued by the Bank of South Carolina, 1863; from Mississippi, sheet music, circa 1864, printed in Columbia.

The collection is insured for 1.8 million dollars. The current market value steadily increases.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

We have received reaccreditation by the American Association of Museums. Less than 11% of the museums in this country have received accreditation. Reaccreditation demonstrates that we have continued to operate on a professional level in accordance with standards of excellence prescribed by the American Association of Museums.

Our function is to provide museum services. We collect, preserve and display items of historical value from all periods of South Carolina history. Additional functions include research; aiding other museums upon request; organizing and conducting tours for school, civic, historical and senior citizen groups; supplying speakers for schools, civic groups, historical organizations and homes for the elderly; making the museum available for meetings of historical and civic groups; inventory, conservation; acquiring gifts then accessioning them; designing and changing exhibits. Primarily we are an educational institution and education is the justification for what we do. Our services are for the benefit of our people.

To adequately serve a museum, the director and staff must become involved with other museum professionals and organizations. We hold memberships in and attend meetings of the American Association of Museums, Southeastern Museums Conference, South Carolina Federation of Museums, Columbia Museums Directors Association, American Association for State and Local History and the Smithsonian Institution, in order to keep abreast of the status quo in the museum profession.



## COLLECTIONS

Artifacts are a primary concern. We attempt to acquire as many South Carolina items of historical value as possible. Too frequently our relics appear in antique shops, many drift out of State. By attending museum and historical meetings, we have cultivated and maintained good contacts and are able to form new ones. Each acquisition must be accessioned, cataloged, inventoried in a cross reference file, then placed in storage.

A few of the items accessioned in 1987-88 are: a complete 1942 Clemson College uniform; a gold ring with lock of John C. Calhoun's hair encased in glass crown; a World War I US Navy uniform; General Ellison Capers' personal volumes of SC CONFEDERATE MILITARY HISTORY; blanket used by a Confederate soldier, 1861-64; US and Confederate coins and currency; jewelry; ladies' and children's fashions; memorabilia from both World Wars; uniforms; numerous books, news articles, photographs and historical documents.

We have the responsibility of telling the South Carolina story in a museum which is attractive, informative and appealing. Our visitors must be impressed by what they see and learn. Display cases must be kept clean and refabricated periodically. Touch-up painting is necessary. Props for displays must be constructed. Narratives must be composed for each case, then signs made. All of the work is performed by the staff.

The Lower Gallery exhibits reflect various periods of South Carolina history: clothing; dolls; quilts; sweetgrass baskets; Catawba pottery; currency; stamps; medals; firearms; edged weapons; uniforms; remnant of the flag of the South Carolina 2nd Regiment of Black Troops, raised on Hilton Head Island; other memorabilia.

In the Upper Gallery we pay tribute to South Carolinians in the military, both past and present. One can see firearms, uniforms; flags; accouterments from the Colonial era up to and including Vietnam. Also featured are South Carolinians in the Space Program.

It is necessary to know the latest techniques in conservation. Firearms and edged weapons must be cleaned and oiled periodically. Woods and leathers must be treated. Often extensive sewing is necessary in affording proper care to fabrics, including flags, clothing, etc. If we know not how to preserve our heirlooms, then we would be wasting our time in collecting them.

The restorations of fabrics are a slow, tedious work. We continue to work on clothing and flags as time permits. Firearms and edged weapons were cleaned regularly. All silver and brass were polished.

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Primarily we are an educational institution. Letters are sent each year to schools urging teachers to bring their classes to Columbia for educational tours. The response has been excellent.

Appointments were scheduled for school groups touring the museum, in addition to requests to arrange all day tours at Columbia area museums, State House, Governor's Mansion, etc. Other tours were conducted for kindergartens, numerous universities and colleges, Senior Citizens, Scouts, State Department of Mental Health, Department of Youth Services, groups from Baptist Medical Center, civic and historical groups.

The museum was host to ROTC ceremonies and meetings; civic and historical organizations.

We assisted legislators, authors, graduate students, the public and the press in their research. Research requests have proved time consuming, but rewarding. Other museums have been assisted upon requests.

The Confederate Relic Room & Museum, along with other area museums, maintains an exhibit in the lower lobby of the State House. Exhibits can also be seen in selected state offices.

The museum has received national and regional exposure with a direct result of increasing numbers of tourists visiting our state. A major boost came after a feature article on the museum appeared in SOUTHERN LIVING magazine. We have enjoyed positive media coverage due to the growing interest in the Confederate era (as evidenced in expanding national and local news stories of reenactments, site preservations, etc.).

### **FINANCES**

During fiscal year 1987-88, approximately 55% of our appropriation was expended for personal service and approximately 45% for operating expenses. According to a survey, published by the American Association of Museums, a healthier situation would be a ratios of 75% for personal service and 25% for operating expenses.

A map showing locations of area museums and places of interests in our vicinity was drawn by one of the staff and has been duplicated on our copying machine. These maps are given to visitors and mailed to schools and individuals planning to visit Columbia.

A financial inventory, of the more valuable artifacts, is on file at General Services for insurance purposes. The collection, mostly obtained through gifts, continues to make more money for the state, as the artifacts steadily increase in value.

Some children, particularly those on school tours, cannot afford admission fees. We are an educational institution, so our facility should be available to all and particularly to students. Therefore, we have attempted to operate on a minimal budget, asking only for funding which is absolutely necessary in the operation of the museum.



## VISITORS

Visitors have come from every state in the Union and the District of Columbia and from 30 foreign countries.

Some museums have reported a decrease in visitors. We are fortunate in that we have had an increase in our school tours.

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